

BEYOND THE "HELPLESS MUSLIMS" TROPE: ISLAM, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

GNDR_ST 390

WINTER
2024



Do Muslim women, queer Muslims, and transgender Muslims need savings? How does the “West” portray Muslim women and queer and transgender Muslims? Is the headscarf oppressive or emancipatory? Can a Muslim be religiously devout and embrace queerness at the same time? This undergraduate seminar introduces students to the relationships between Islam, gender, and sexuality in the contemporary world. Given the nature of the discussion, this course is interdisciplinary at heart—at the very least, we will engage with scholarships in gender and sexuality

studies, Islamic studies, Islamic feminism, queer Islamic studies, and the anthropology of Islam. Throughout different cross-cutting themes, we will discuss: (1) how Islamic texts portray gender and sexual diversity; (2) how the “West” and liberal traditions imagine gender and sexual minority within the Muslim population—including, but not limited to, women, queer, and transgender individuals; and (3) how Muslim women, queer Muslims, and transgender Muslims have lived through the constructed incompatibility between Islam and gender and sexual diversity. This course aims to deterritorialize discussions on Islam, gender, and sexuality by not only looking at Middle Eastern and North African contexts but also reading through the various renditions and expressions of Islam, gender, and sexuality in Southeast Asia, Europe, South Asia, and the Americas. Given that this is an advanced undergraduate seminar, a basic understanding of Islam is expected.

Febi Ramadhan

MW 9:30–10:50am
University Hall 312